

NOTICE.

THE Undersigned, having become LESSEE of the "HONGKONG DAILY PRESS" and its Business connected therewith, will conduct the same on its own account from this date.
R. CHATTERTON WILCOX.
Daily Press Office,
Hongkong, 1st January, 1878.

NOTICE.

A. S. WATSON AND CO.,
FAMILY AND DISPENSING
CHEMISTS,
By Appointment to His Excellency the Governor and his Royal Highness the DUKE of EDINBURGH,
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL DRUGGISTS,
PERFUMERS,
PATENT MEDICINE VENDORS,
DEPOTGENTS SUNDRIES,
And
AERATED WATER MAKERS,

SHIPS' MEDICINE CHESTS REFITTED,
PASSENGER SHIPS SUPPLIED.

NOTICE.—To avoid delay in the execution of Orders it is particularly requested that all business communications be addressed to the Firm, A. S. WATSON and Co. at
HONGKONG DISPENSARY. [17]

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications on Editorial matters should be addressed "The Editor," and those on business "The Manager," and not to individuals by name.

Correspondents are requested to forward their name and address with communications addressed to the Editor, not for publication, but as evidence of good faith.

All letters for publication should be written on one side of the paper only.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, JULY 24TH, 1878.

YESTERDAY we called attention to the importance of measures being taken to preserve the infant forests which have been planted, and those which are to be formed shortly in the Colony. The influence of trees on the climate is so great and obvious that it is simply marvellous that greater efforts were not made in past times in this direction.

Had there been a Mr. Pearce at the head of the Surveyor-General's Department twenty years ago there might now be more foliage on the slopes of the island; but the importance of arboriculture was not recognised in those days, and nothing was done outside the city to redeem the hills from their stately appearance. Nowadays, with the advance of science, this question is everywhere being discussed, and in a short time all civilised Governments will make it one of their great

objects to reclaim the waste places in their boundaries. Man's improvidence and ignorance has in nearly every part of the world turned once fertile country into barren wastes, but there are tens of thousands of acres of such land which may be irrigated and planted be rendered available for cultivation. Arguments to prove the remarkable influence of forests on rainfall and climate are plentiful, and even actual facts are not wanting. One related by a contemporary is well worthy of notice. The Wolf Spring, situated in the commune of Souhey, in France, is in the middle of a steep pasture inclining to the south. When first observed, the spring was but a small thread of water running after long rains, but disappearing with their cessation. Eighty years ago, the owners of the land, seeing that some firs were shooting up towards the northern end, allowed them to grow, and they presently formed a flourishing grove. As soon as this was well grown, a fine spring appeared in place of the occasional gill, and furnished abundant water in the longest drought. For forty or fifty years, the spring was considered the best in Clos du Dous. A few years back the grove was felled, and the land turned again into pasture. The spring disappeared altogether, and the place is now as dry as it was ninety years ago. Trees and forests help the formation of springs and water-sources not only by the humidity they produce and the condensation of vapour by refrigeration, but also by reason of the obstacles which they present to the evaporation of water in the soil itself; whilst the roots moreover, by dividing the soil, make it porous and facilitate filtration. Hongkong is famous for its numerous clear streams, but most of them dry up altogether or are reduced to a mere thread if there is a long drought. There can be no doubt that they would be of a much more permanent character if they ran through forests. They would dry up much sooner than they do now, but for the fact that nearly every watercourse is more or less overgrown with bushes and small trees which have sprung up along their channels. The new forests which we hope to see created in a few years will undoubtedly increase the supply of water, temper the heat in summer, and render prolonged droughts impossible.

We regret to find, through Reuter's agency, that the irrepressible Mr. GLADSTONE has thought fit to try and get up an agitation in England against the Treaty of Peace just concluded through the labours of the European Congress. It is difficult to understand what the carpenter ex-Premier would have wished or advocated. The task of the British Government was a most difficult one; in fact, it is one seemed impossible that a peaceful settlement of that most intricate of problems—the Eastern Question—could be effected. That the Cabinet have for a time at least averted a general European conflagration, and at the same checkmated Russia on most points, is a proof of their moderation, their tact, and their firmness. It is impossible to know what part England would have played at this crisis if Mr. GLADSTONE had been in power; but whether policy he might have adopted, we think the Empire has cause to be profoundly thankful that its destiny is not in such hands. There are some points in the settlement arrived at which all true Englishmen must deplore, among them being the cession of Batoum and the retrocession of Bessarabia to Russia. But, as Lord BEACONFIELD urges, these are not matters which England would be justified in fighting for single-handed, especially after

Russia has made such large concessions on her original demands. Then, again, though the claims of Greece have been somewhat lost sight of in the creation of a Bulgarian state out of Roumania, yet this may be rectified by the Greek element of the population—which is at once the most numerous and influential—forcing its way to the front and ultimately converting this southern Bulgaria into a Greek province. The extension of British territory at all is probably due entirely to English and Italian influence; Russia never intended any enlargement of the borders of the Hellenic Kingdom. The decisions of the Congress cannot give universal satisfaction; they have been arrived at by a series of compromises made to avoid another great war. But it was clearly impossible for any one Power to insist upon Russia disengaging the whole of her prey, and therefore in criticising the action of the British Government at the Congress this fact should not be overlooked. Considering the cost in blood and treasure entailed upon her by the war with Turkey, we think Russia has conceded more than might have been expected even under the pressure brought to bear upon her.

Master Lloyd and Chester's Indian tea report states that the quantity of Indian tea imported into London from the 1st of January to the 1st of May this year was 14,325,000 lbs., as compared with 9,675,500 lbs. imported in the corresponding period of last year.

The British ship *Fontham*, Captain Taylor, and the French ship *Madame*, Captain Pataud, left Newcastle N.S.W. on the 16th ultimo with coal for Messrs. Vogel, Hagedorn & Co. They both arrived here yesterday morning, early within one or two hours of each other, and did not see one another until their arrival at this port. They were forty-six days on the passage.

The plaid despatch-boat *Vigilant*, Lieutenant Commander Annesley, went out yesterday for a trial trip. She returned to the harbour last evening after a most successful trial. The new shaft, which was made by Mr. Robt. of the Naval Yard, from an old shaft which it may be remembered was found beneath some coal at the P. & O. G. The piece of workmanship is a proof of what the engineers are capable of doing when put to the test. Mr. Robt. by his clear weight and energy has saved the country a large sum of money.

Yesterday morning, about seven o'clock, the British bark *Earl Baden*, Captain Morris, which had been lying at anchor long whereat Wancho was being loaded by two tugs, came between the *Ossian* and the *Amber*. The vessel was driving sixteen feet, four inches of water and when about 300 yards to the westward of the pier and in close proximity to the *Ossian* she touched the ground suddenly. Every effort was made to get her off in deep water but without effect. The two tugs wanted about three hours more to do it. At nine o'clock the water had left the ship fore and aft, and when in the day the water left nearly one foot.

The defendants had been trying agents for hire to float her but without success. Late last night she was still aground. A Chinese pilot was in charge at the time the vessel grounded.

Dr. Silvester gave his second entertainment in the Theatre Royal on Monday night to an audience which was much smaller than the mass of the talented performers deserved. Although

small, however, the audience was certainly an appreciative one and the entranced lady in her dress graceful attitudes called forth enthusiasm and applause. The fairy fountain worked well in this occasion, and a bright wall was seen. The doctor was followed with clear water for the fountain than on Saturday. The other items on the programme were gone through with more or less ability and the entertainment on the whole was a most success except as far as the patronage it received. This latter circumstance may be explained by the fact that the programme was not a success as that on Saturday. For to-night an entire change of programme is promised, which will conclude with a wonderful imitation by the "Fairy Fountain" of a snow-storm.

SUPREME COURT.

JULY 23RD.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION.

BEFORE THE ACTING CHIEF JUSTICE HON. F. SNOWDEN.

DISPUTED CHARTER PARTY.

NICHOLLS V. PUSTAN & CO. \$1,000.—This was a claim by the master of the British bark *Moss Glen*, against Messrs. Pustau and Co., for the payment of a charter-party. The Attorney-General, instructed by Messrs. Sharp, Toller, and Johnson, appeared for the plaintiff and Mr. Hayler, Q.C., instructed by Mr. Bruce, for the defendants.

The Attorney-General, in opening his case, said the plaintiff claimed damages for refusal by the defendant to carry out an agreement for the delivery of the British bark *Moss Glen*, made on the 1st July, 1877, for a period of six months, which was first, that by the memorandum of charter that the vessel was guaranteed to carry 830 tons dead weight, and to be "good, staunch, and strong, and a good risk in the local insurance offices"; second, that if the vessel was insured with the local offices, and would not be practically insurable at all; third, that the vessel would not be seaworthy so loaded; and fourth, that the agreement by the said breach of warranty was rescinded.

Mr. Hayler said it was also his intention to rely on the general defences of non-acceptance.

The Attorney-General, continuing, said these defences were, first, that the plaintiff had no right to claim a survey of law and fact. As he was instructed the *Moss Glen* received instructions from his主人 to sell herself failing to do had made up his mind to get a charter if possible for home. Mr. Bernhard, aliphor, came and saw him with respect to a charter. The ship was well known here. The defendants had at one time been agents for her. Messrs. Melchers and also himself had been on board the *Moss Glen* in February last, and had got a survey of law and fact. He was instructed the *Moss Glen* was to be seaworthy in the harbour where. The captain received a survey of law and fact failing to do he would get a charter if possible for home. Mr. Bernhard, aliphor, came and saw him with respect to a charter. The ship was well known here. The defendants had at one time been agents for her. Messrs. 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